

# **Qualitative Case Review**

## **Western Region**

**Fiscal Year 2004**

### ***Preliminary Results***

**Office of Services Review**

**September 2003**

## Executive Summary

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- 24 cases were reviewed for the Western Region Qualitative Case Review conducted in September 2003.
- The overall Child Status score was 91.7%, which was identical to last year's score. This meets the exit criteria of 85% and is a positive result. (All results are preliminary until all case stories have been received.)
- Safety scores also reached high levels with 95.8% acceptable cases, which is again identical to last year's score.
- Safety, Appropriateness of Placement, Health/Physical Well-being, and Caregiver Functioning showed excellent results again as they did last year. This year Emotional/Behavioral Well-being also showed excellent results at 87.5%, exceeding the exit criteria. Learning Progress scored 83.3%, just under the exit criteria. Areas needing some improvement are Family Functioning and Resourcefulness, Prospects for Permanence, and Stability.
- The Overall System Performance improved significantly again this year. It went from 70.8% last year to 79.2% this year
- Five system indicators improved, five declined, and one remained the same. The five that improved showed significant increases, while most of those that declined showed minor decreases. The five indicators that improved were Child and Family Team Coordination, Functional Assessment, Tracking and Adaptation, Child and Family Participation, and Successful Transitions. Three of the six core indicators reached the 70% bar for exit: Child and Family Team/Coordination, Plan Implementation, and Tracking and Adaptation. Although the indicators of Child and Family Planning Process, Plan Implementation, Formal/Informal Supports, Effective Results, and Caregiver Support all regressed slightly, all but Child and Family Planning Process remained above the exit criteria. Long Term View remained identical to last year at 50%.
- Home-based cases scored significantly lower than foster care cases. Also, cases with a goal of Remain Home scored lower than other cases. Out of the ten cases with a goal of remain home only six reached an acceptable level on System Performance.
- High caseload size did not have a negative impact on the results. Caseworkers with higher caseloads actually performed better, on average, than workers who carried a smaller caseload, although it is important to note that only three workers had caseloads of 17 or more cases.
- Of the 24 caseworkers reviewed only two were new workers with less than 12 months work experience. All others have been working for DCFS for more than a year. This demonstrates an excellent worker retention rate.

## Methodology

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The Qualitative Case Review was held the week of September 15-19, 2003. Twenty-four open DCFS cases in the Western Region were selected and scored. The cases were reviewed by certified reviewers from the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group (CWPPG), the Office of Services Review (OSR), and the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), as well as first time reviewers from DCFS and outside stakeholders. The cases were selected by CWPPG based on a sampling matrix assuring that a representative group of children were reviewed. The sample included children in out-of-home care and families receiving home-based services, such as voluntary and protective supervision and intensive family preservation. Cases were selected to include offices throughout the region.

The information was obtained through in-depth interviews with the child (if old enough to participate), his or her parents, or other guardians, foster parents (when placed in foster care), caseworker, teacher, therapist, other service providers, and others having a significant role in the child's life. In addition the child's file, including prior CPS investigations and other available records, was reviewed.

## Performance Tables

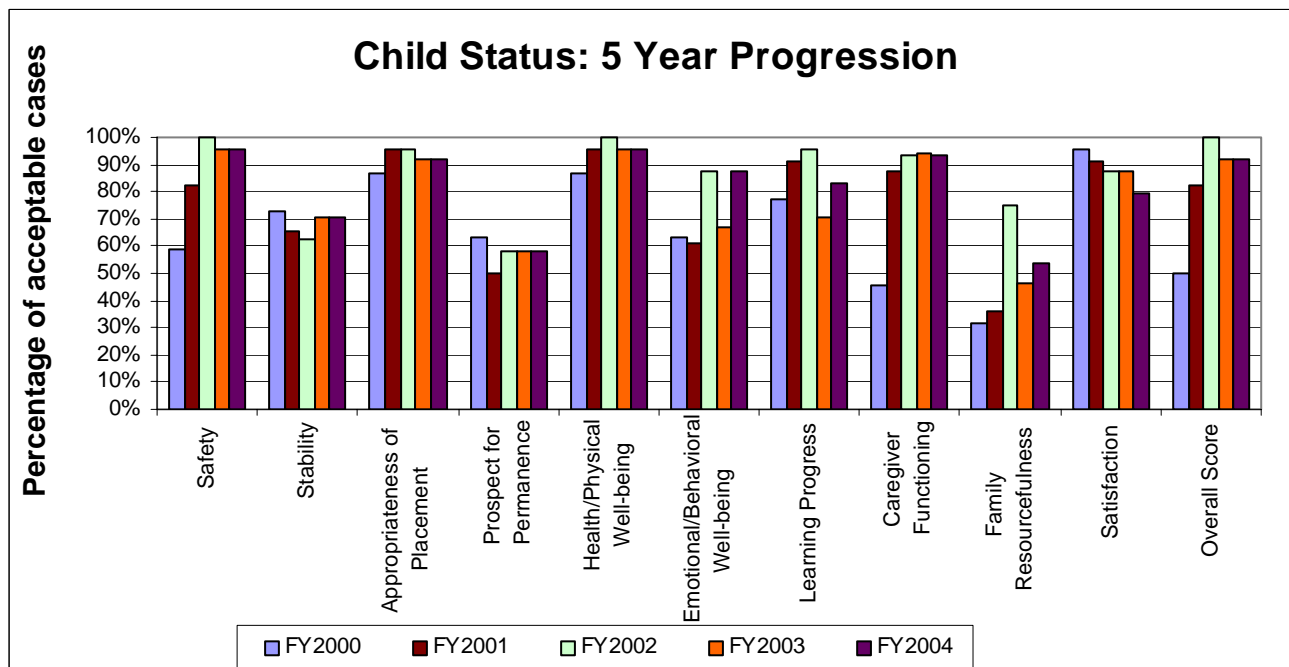
Preliminary data

The results in the following tables are based on the scores provided to OSR at the end of the Western Region Review. They contain the scores of 24 cases. These results are preliminary only and are subject to change until all reviewers have submitted their case stories.

Western Child Status									
		# of cases			FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03	FY04
	# of cases	Needing			Baseline				Current
	Acceptable	Improvement	Exit Criteria 85% on overall score		Scores				Scores
Safety	23	1	95.8%	95.8%	59.1%	82.6%	100.0%	95.8%	95.8%
Stability	17	7	70.8%	70.8%	72.7%	65.2%	62.5%	70.8%	70.8%
Appropriateness of Placement	22	2	91.7%	91.7%	86.4%	95.7%	95.7%	91.7%	91.7%
Prospect for Permanence	14	10	58.3%	58.3%	63.6%	50.0%	58.3%	58.3%	58.3%
Health/Physical Well-being	23	1	95.8%	95.8%	86.4%	95.7%	100.0%	95.8%	95.8%
Emotional/Behavioral Well-being	21	3	87.5%	87.5%	63.6%	60.9%	87.5%	66.7%	87.5%
Learning Progress	20	4	83.3%	83.3%	77.3%	91.3%	95.7%	70.8%	83.3%
Caregiver Functioning	14	1	93.3%	93.3%	45.5%	87.5%	93.3%	94.4%	93.3%
Family Resourcefulness	8	7	53.3%	53.3%	31.8%	35.7%	75.0%	46.7%	53.3%
Satisfaction	19	5	79.2%	79.2%	95.5%	91.3%	87.5%	87.5%	79.2%
<b>Overall Score</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>91.7%</b>	<b>91.7%</b>	<b>50.0%</b>	<b>82.6%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>91.7%</b>	<b>91.7%</b>

1)

- 1) This score reflects the percent of cases that had an overall acceptable Child Status score. It is not an average of FY04 current scores.



Note: these scores are preliminary and subject to change

## **Statistical Analysis of Child Status Results:**

**The overall Child Status score was 91.7%, the same as last year, with only two out of 24 cases not reaching an acceptable level. This exceeds the exit criteria of 85% and is a very positive result.**

Five of the ten indicators had results identical to last year's. These were Safety (95.8%), Stability (70.8%), Appropriateness of Placement (91.7%), Prospects for Permanence (58.3%), and Health/Physical Well-being (95.8%). Safety scores again reached a high level with 95.8% acceptable cases. Only one case had safety concerns.

Of the other five indicators, four were up and one was down. The most improved indicator was Emotional/Behavioral Well-being, which rose from 66.7% last year to 87.5% this year, an increase of 20.8 points. More modest increases were seen in Learning Progress (up 12.5%), Family Resourcefulness (up 6.6 points), and Caregiver Functioning (up 5.6 points).

Indicators that showed excellent results included: Safety (95.8%), Appropriateness of Placement (91.7%), Health/Physical Well-being (95.8%), and Emotional/Behavioral Well-being (87.5%). Caregiver Functioning (that's the functioning of substitute caregivers, such as foster parents) scored a perfect 100%.

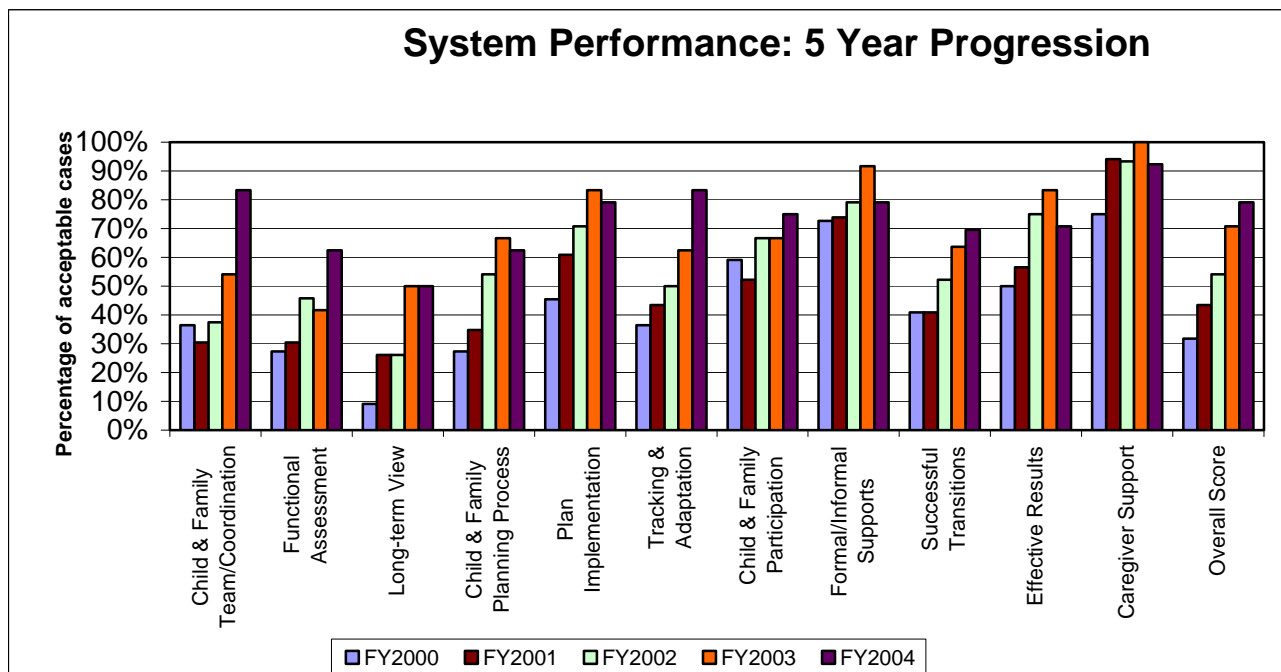
Family Resourcefulness increased slightly from 46.7% to 53.3%, but it is still an area of concern. The other indicator of concern is Prospects for Permanence, which remained unchanged from last year at 58.3%. Satisfaction, which exceeded the exit criteria last year at 87.5%, fell to 79.2%, putting it below the exit criteria. Satisfaction was the only indicator that decreased rather than increased.

Five indicators exceeded the exit criteria. They were Safety, Appropriateness of Placement, Health/Physical Well-being, Emotional Well-being, and Caregiver Functioning. Learning Progress just missed the exit criteria, scoring 83.3%.

In addition to evaluating the child's status, reviewers evaluated how well the system is performing. There were positive improvements in most of the system performance indicators.

Western System Performance									
		# of cases			FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03	FY04
	# of cases	needing	Exit Criteria 70% on Shaded indicators	Baseline					Current
	acceptable	improvement	Exit Criteria 85% on overall score	Scores					Scores
Child & Family Team/Coordination	20	4	83.3%	36.4%	30.4%	37.5%	54.2%	83.3%	
Functional Assessment	15	9	62.5%	27.3%	30.4%	45.8%	41.7%	62.5%	
Long-term View	12	12	50.0%	9.1%	26.1%	26.1%	50.0%	50.0%	
Child & Family Planning Process	15	9	62.5%	27.3%	34.8%	54.2%	66.7%	62.5%	
Plan Implementation	19	5	79.2%	45.5%	60.9%	70.8%	83.3%	79.2%	
Tracking & Adaptation	20	4	83.3%	36.4%	43.5%	50.0%	62.5%	83.3%	
Child & Family Participation	18	6	75.0%	59.1%	52.2%	66.7%	66.7%	75.0%	
Formal/Informal Supports	19	5	79.2%	72.7%	73.9%	79.2%	91.7%	79.2%	
Successful Transitions	16	7	69.6%	40.9%	40.9%	52.2%	63.6%	69.6%	
Effective Results	17	7	70.8%	50.0%	56.5%	75.0%	83.3%	70.8%	
Caregiver Support	12	1	92.3%	75.0%	94.1%	93.3%	100.0%	92.3%	
<b>Overall Score</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>79.2%</b>	<b>31.8%</b>	<b>43.5%</b>	<b>54.2%</b>	<b>70.8%</b>	<b>79.2%</b>	

1) This score reflects the percent of cases that had an overall acceptable System Performance score. It is not an average of FY04 current scores.



Note: these scores are preliminary and subject to change

## **Statistical Analysis of System Performance Results:**

**The overall score for System Performance went from 70.8%% last year to 79.2% this year. Of the 24 cases that were reviewed, 19 had acceptable system performance. This is a significant improvement over last year. More importantly, it continues Western Region's trend of overall improvement each year.**

Five system indicators improved from last year, five declined, and one remained the same. Many of the increases were substantial, while the decreases were more modest. The most improved of the five indicators that increased was Child and Family Team Coordination, up a whopping 29.1 percentage points (from 54.2% to 83.3%). Functional Assessment and Tracking and Adaptation both had a substantial increase of 20.8 points (from 41.7% to 62.5%, and 62.5% to 83.3%, respectively). Child and Family Participation and Successful Transitions each showed modest increases (from 66.7% to 75% and 63.6% to 69.6%, respectively). Three of the six core indicators reached the 70% exit criteria: Child and Family Team/Coordination, Plan Implementation, and Tracking and Adaptation. This is a major improvement from last year when only one indicator (Plan Implementation) exceeded the exit criteria.

The indicators of Child and Family Planning Process, Plan Implementation, and Caregiver Support each decreased slightly. (4.2, 4.1, and 7.7points, respectively). Effective Results and Formal/Informal Supports showed more significant decreases (from 83.3% to 70.8% and from 91.7% to 79.2%, respectively). Long Term View remained identical to last year and is still a concern at 50%.

The highest scoring system indicators included Caregiver Support (92.3%), Child and Family Team Coordination and Tracking and Adaptation (each at 83.3%). Plan Implementation and Formal/Informal Supports (each at 79.2%) and Child and Family Participation (75%) also scored well.

The indicators most in need of improvement were Functional Assessment and Child and Family Planning Process (each at 62.5%) and Long Term View (50.0%). All three of these are core indicators that must score at least 70% to meet the exit criteria.

Most impressive is the system's overall trend of consistent improvement. For Fiscal Year 2000 through Fiscal Year 2004, the annual overall system scores have been 31.8%, 43.5%, 54.2%, 70.8% and 79.2%. If Western Region can maintain this trend, they will exceed the overall exit criteria next year, although some work remains on the core indicators.

Additional analysis of the results supports the impressive system improvement. No case scored a 1 on any of the indicators. Of the five cases that didn't pass on Overall System Performance, two had an overall score of 2 and the remaining three cases had a score of 3.

**Areas of Greatest Improvement:**

There were three system performance indicators that showed substantial improvement over last year's ratings: Child and Family Team Coordination, Functional Assessment, and Tracking and Adaptation. This progress is especially significant because all three of these are core indicators. Of these three indicators, Child and Family Team Coordination showed the greatest improvement. It was up a whopping 29.1 percentage points, from 54.2% last year to 83.3% this year.

Functional Assessment and Tracking and Adaptation were each up 20.8%. Functional Assessment improved remarkably from last year's rating of 41.7%, scoring 62.5% this year. Tracking and Adaptation rose from 62.5% to 83.3%, nearly reaching the exit criteria.

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## ANALYSIS OF DATA

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### RESULTS BY CASE TYPE AND PERMANENCY GOALS

Foster care cases scored significantly higher than home-based cases. Thirteen out of fourteen foster care cases had an acceptable overall System Performance, while only six of the ten home-based cases passed. In other words, 93% of foster care cases had acceptable system performance while only 60% of in-home cases had acceptable system performance. These results are very similar to last year's results where 87% of foster care cases had acceptable system performance while only 56% of in-home cases had acceptable system performance. The following chart shows that this has been a trend for the past five years. Foster care cases have consistently scored better than in-home cases on both Child Status and System Performance. There is a need for analyzing the case stories of the in-home cases to try to understand what causes this discrepancy in the results. The scores show that the in-home cases this year were weak in the areas of assessment, long-term view, and planning with only three cases out of ten reaching passing scores in all three of these areas.

Year	# foster care cases in sample	# in-home cases in sample	% of foster cases with acceptable child status	% of in-home cases acceptable child status	% of foster cases with acceptable system performance	% of in-home cases acceptable system performance
2000	8	14	63%	43%	50%	21%
2001	12	11	83%	82%	50%	36%
2002	13	11	100%	100%	62%	45%
2003	15	9	100%	78%	87%	56%
2004	14	10	100%	80%	93%	60%

The Overall System Performance results by Permanency Goal also indicate the same trend. Cases with a goal of Remain Home were the ones with the most concerning results. Out of the ten cases with that goal only six reached an acceptable level on System Performance. And only one of them had acceptable scores on Long-term View and Functional Assessment.

Goal	# in sample	# Acceptable System Performance	% Acceptable System Performance
Adoption	4	4	100.0%
Guardianship	1	1	100.0%
Independent Living	5	4	80.0%
Permanent Foster Care	0	0	NA
Remain Home	10	6	60.0%
Return Home	4	4	100.0%

## RESULTS BY AGE OF TARGET CHILD

The comparison of the results for cases with older and younger children for this year shows that System Performance is higher for children under age five than it is for older children. All of the cases in which the children were under age five had acceptable System Performance. Where children were six to twelve years of age, 6 out of 8 cases had acceptable System Performance. Where children were age 13 or older, 8 out of 11 cases had acceptable System Performance.

The comparison of the results for cases with older and younger children also shows that Child Status is slightly higher for children under age five than it is for older children. All of the cases in which the children were under age five had acceptable System Performance. Where children were age six to twelve, 7 out of 8 cases had acceptable Child Status. Where children were older than age thirteen, 10 out of 11 cases had acceptable child Status.

Looking back over the past four years, there is no clear trend that would predict how children would score based on their age. Age does not appear to be much of a factor in whether cases score acceptably or not. It should be noted that the number of cases pulled within each age group has varied dramatically from year to year from a high of 12 cases to a low of 3 cases.

Year	Child Status			System Performance		
	0-5 yrs	6-12 yrs	13+ yrs	0-5 yrs	6-12 yrs	13+ yrs
<b>2001</b>	100%	100%	67%	100%	75%	8.3%
<b>2002</b>	100%	100%	100%	50%	62.5%	50%
<b>2003</b>	100%	100%	75%	75%	75%	75%
<b>2004</b>	100%	88%	91%	100%	75%	73%

## RESULTS BY CASELOAD DEMOGRAPHICS

High caseload did not have a negative impact on the results for this review. Of the caseworkers with a “manageable” caseload (16 open cases or less), 76.5% scored on an acceptable level on System Performance while 100% of the workers with a large caseload (17 or more open cases) had an acceptable score. On Child Status 90.5% of those with smaller case loads had acceptable score while 100% of those with high case loads had acceptable scores. It is important to note that in this review only three workers had case loads of more than 17 cases, but it is still impressive that all of these workers’ cases had acceptable scores on both System Performance and Child Status.

<b>Caseload Size: # of open cases</b>	<b>Total # of caseworkers reviewed</b>	<b>Scored acceptable on System Performance</b>
<b>16 open cases or less</b>	21	16 (76.2%)
<b>17 open cases or more</b>	3	3 (100%)

Of the 24 caseworkers, only two were new workers with less than 12 months work experience. Both of their cases had acceptable Child Status and System Performance ratings.

The other workers have been working for DCFS for more than a year. This demonstrates an excellent worker retention rate and a lower turnover rate than in most other regions.

## RESULTS BY OFFICES AND SUPERVISORS

The following table displays the overall case results by office and supervisors. The cases with unacceptable System Performance were distributed fairly evenly across the offices. American Fork had one case that was unacceptable, Fillmore had one, Provo had one, and Spanish Fork had two. The Heber, Nephi, and Park City offices each had only one case pulled, and all of those cases passed. Only one supervisor had more than one case that scored unacceptable on System Performance. Two supervisors did exceptionally well. Kevin Norell and Casey Christopherson each had four cases that were reviewed and all of those cases scored acceptable on both Child Status and System Performance.

Case#	Supervisor	Office	Child Status	System Performance	System Performance by Office	Sys. Perf. by Office last year	System Performance by Supervisor	
04W08	Kent Downs	A	Acceptable	Acceptable	4 acceptable	75%	Kent Downs (1case)	100%
04W07	Kevin Norell	A	Acceptable	Acceptable	1 unacceptable			
04W11	Kevin Norell	A	Acceptable	Acceptable	80%		Kevin Norell (4 cases)	100%
04W22	Kevin Norell	A	Acceptable	Acceptable				
04W20	Susan Knadler	A	Acceptable	Unacceptable			Susan Knadler (1 case)	0%
04W10	Patricia Solt	F	Acceptable	Acceptable	1 acceptable	50%		
04W24	Patricia Solt	F	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	1 unacceptable		Patricia Solt (2 cases)	50%
					50%			
					1 acceptable	100%		
04W14	Kevin Norell	H	Acceptable	Acceptable	0 unacceptable			
					100%			
					1 acceptable	N/A	Nancy Zelenak (1 case)	100%
04W21	Nancy Zelenak	N	Acceptable	Acceptable	0 unacceptable			
					100%			
04W17	Barbara Stubbs	O	Acceptable	Acceptable	3 acceptable	100%		
04W09	Carolyn Nay	O	Acceptable	Unacceptable	2 unacceptable		Barbara Stubbs (1 case)	100%
04W13	Carolyn Nay	O	Acceptable	Acceptable	60%			
04W15	Carolyn Nay	O	Acceptable	Unacceptable			Carolyn Nay (4 cases)	50%
04W16	Carolyn Nay	O	Acceptable	Acceptable				
04W04	Casey Christopherson	P	Acceptable	Acceptable	8 acceptable	60%	Casey Christopherson (4 cases)	100%
04W06	Casey Christopherson	P	Acceptable	Acceptable	1 unacceptable			
04W18	Casey Christopherson	P	Acceptable	Acceptable	89%		Clair Nielson (1 case)	100%
04W19	Casey Christopherson	P	Acceptable	Acceptable				
04W12	Clair Nielson	P	Acceptable	Acceptable			Trish Coburn (4 cases)	75%
04W02	Trish Coburn	P	Acceptable	Acceptable				
04W03	Trish Coburn	P	Acceptable	Acceptable				
04W05	Trish Coburn	P	Acceptable	Acceptable				
04W23	Trish Coburn	P	Unacceptable	Unacceptable				
04W01	Kerri Ketterer	S	Acceptable	Acceptable	1 acceptable			
					0 unacceptable	100%	Kerri Ketterer (1 case)	100%
					100%			

## Exit Conference: Flip chart notes

### Strengths:

- Receptiveness and attitude of the region, willingness to attend to the feedback from the review.
- Much stronger culture of the C&F team.
- Good example of how to use the LTV to move a child toward independence.
- Great advocacy for getting the needs of teenagers met in the least restrictive setting.
- Foster Parents very complimentary of the responsiveness to their needs.
- Excellent array of services.
- Good work to develop informal supports.
- Three agencies unified their plans.
- Two cases where there was a shared understanding of the needs of the child, not just the legal timelines.
- Team separated by distance had very good coordination.
- Difficult team case had 3 foster options that were invested in the child and willing to support her.
- Good stability in placement.
- Good attention to stability in a case of a kinship placement in another region.
- Plan in place to insure the sibling relationship was maintained.
- Parents were pleased with the outcomes in their cases.
- Region has financial resources and creative use of flexible funding.
- Mother brought to full partnership even when child in an institutional setting.
- Saw improvement to a functional assessment, team had good understanding.
- Good attention to engaging mother while incarcerated, stayed an active participant.
- Good connection between DV and child welfare services.
- Good relationship with legal partners.
- Saw where a new worker was trained and mentored according to the plan.

### Suggestions for Improvement from the Region:

- More training to help workers recognize underlying needs and how to implement them in the planning process.
- Need to assist the youth in ILP to catch the vision of their LTV.
- Language skills for workers to better serve Hispanic families, audit classes at BYU.
- Provide supports for adoptive families for the long term to prevent re-entry.
- Examine the barriers as well as the needs.

## Practice Improvement Opportunities (comments from reviewers):

### Planning and Teaming:

1. Teaming requires frequent communication and follow through.
2. Training and coaching around needs-based planning, when a need is identified, be sure it is included in the planning. Is the written plan capturing the implicit plan of the team?
3. Repeated conflict between requirements for parents in the plan, i.e. the requirement to maintain employment vs. treatment time demands.
4. Relationship with the AG is sometimes driving practice on particular cases.

### LTV:

1. Could improve the LTV by addressing post-adoptive services.
2. Planning for transitions prior to the occurrence.
3. Focused on the child, mother's needs didn't get addressed and vice versa, need attention to the needs of the entire family.
4. Kinship placement not getting the attention and support to prevent burnout.

### Functional Assessment:

1. More attention to underlying needs in assessment and planning.
2. Disconnect between the written plan and the team's functional plan, same for functional assessments.
3. Aggressively address substance abuse.
4. There needs to be crisis and safety plans for DV.

### System Barriers:

- Insufficient funds for guardianship prevents placements moving to this goal.
- Lack of flexibility in treatment to allow parents to still meet the need to provide for basic needs.
- Quality and flexibility of public mental health providers.
- Loss of TANF benefits.
- ORS becoming an obstacle.
- Fathers being written off, not recognizing the contributions they can make.
- Funding constraints not allowing for a complete transition when aging out.
- Problems with licensing kinship placements.
- Meeting the needs of low-functioning parents.
- Lack of resources, access to U.A. testing.
- More training for DV.

### Focus Groups:

The following groups or individuals were interviewed: DCFS administrators, DCFS supervisors, DCFS caseworkers, DCFS trainers, foster parents, and a juvenile court judge.

#### **DCFS Administrators**

Administrators reported success in getting nearly all workers caught up on Practice Model training. They provide monthly training and refresher courses and weekly mentoring for new workers. In January they will begin a half-day training/half-day mentoring schedule.

Administrators reported success in using the teaming process to set expectations with residential providers and having transition plans set early on. They are working on establishing a partnership with Wasatch Mental Health (WMH) that will result in WMH taking the lead on cases where there are severe mental health issues.

Analysis of data has revealed that disruptions and moves tend to be highest with children who are age 13 or older. A placement committee is meeting each week to review needs and achieve well thought out placements.

Administrators are helping supervisors focus on specific data indicators and recognize the need to prioritize the reports and data. They are working on a graphic presentation of data so that it is more user-friendly.

Administrators believe their biggest challenge next year will be incorporating Practice Model principles into CPS practice and investigations. As part of this, the relationship with AG's will be addressed so that cases can be more clinically driven rather than legally driven.

Administrators identified housing for clients as their greatest resource need.

#### **DCFS Supervisors**

Supervisors report that staffing has been an issue. Because they are waiting for new workers to come on board, supervisors have been doing cases. This has been especially prevalent in CPS. The new protective order rules have also meant an increased caseload for CPS. Supervisors were also concerned that there are no incentives for good work, which is contrary to what workers preach to families.

On the issue of training, supervisors see a need to get workers out into the field faster. They suggest that some classroom training could be combined or eliminated, and more time be allotted for field training.

To address budgetary concerns, high cost placements go before a committee. A team has been set up to review intensive services.

Supervisors identified three resource needs: housing for clients, services for young people who don't qualify for DSPD or mental health services although they can't function in society, and more structured foster homes. They also suggested that a Domestic Violence Court that functions similar to the Drug Court would be helpful.

Reducing the number of Foster Care Citizen Reviews, adding a third Drug Court, and assigning an administrator to supervisors were all reported as positive changes that have been implemented in the past year.

### **DCFS Trainers**

The trainers appreciated the new administration for insuring that workers are getting the training completed. The region is providing mentoring opportunities to make the training "real." Monthly refresher trainings and Monday meetings are provided to reinforce training. A six-hour unit of Practice Model training is being provided to new and current foster parents. They hope to have all foster parents trained by December. They are planning on deploying a mini training on flexible funding statewide in January.

### **DCFS Caseworkers**

Caseworkers listed worker turnover, supervisors being unavailable to mentor because they have caseloads themselves, and a lack of training on new adoption subsidy policy as recent changes that have negatively affected casework. A change in the policy regarding face-to-face visits with children has freed up workers' time and was reported as a positive change.

Workers listed supportive leadership, team consistency, practice model training for new workers, mentoring, and teaming as things that are working well. They see family teaming as the core of casework and believe that if there is a team the case will be successful.

The workers saw opportunities to improve the Practice Model training. They would like to eliminate the "fluff," make it more realistic to address specifics such as dealing with resistant clients, and resolve conflicts between the training and casework.

Caseworkers need additional resources such as more special needs money and access to better therapists. They would also like to see more training for residential providers, proctor parents, and group home staff members who they believe receive less training than DCFS foster parents.

Workers are feeling pressured to cut back on UA's or require the client to pay. There is also a waiting list for drug court. Finally, workers would like better information about how to access existing resources that are available.

Caseworkers perceive their supervisors as being most concerned about timeframes, paperwork, SAFE overdue action items, and reducing risks and liability. They find it difficult to get time with their supervisors unless they have a crisis situation.

Some of the challenges that workers face are dealing with parents who are involved in custody battles, clients who get into relationships with each other, parents delaying accepting responsibility thus making it difficult to complete drug programs and meet permanency deadlines, and foster parents who manipulate the system, triangulate, or wait until there is a crisis to ask the worker for help.

In the area of education, workers reported feeling hostility from school administration. They feel the district defers decisions to them rather than bringing their expertise to the team. The lack of a behavior modification program in the Alpine District and lack of resources for pre-teen children while they are still moldable were seen as barriers.

If workers could change anything, they would like better direction from upper administration and supervisors. They would like paperwork reduced and find it ironic that they are not allowed overtime, yet they see no other way to take care of the overload.

### **Foster Parents**

Foster parents report a big improvement in the support they receive from the division and feel that most often they work with good caseworkers. They perceived the Foster Care Coordinator as a vital support.

When asked about resources, foster parents said they would like DCFS to provide more tracker services like those they see being provided by private agencies. They also need more help with mentoring and respite. Respite for sexual perpetrators was particularly difficult to locate. Issues around adoption subsidies, particularly the concern that lack of subsidies may be discouraging adoptions, was also discussed. Foster parents also mentioned the gap in services for older youth who don't have the skills to be on their own due to their level of mental functioning. They don't see them being kept in care until age 21 like they could be.

Foster parents have had difficulty getting therapy for their foster children if they are not in the Wasatch Mental Health system. They see a need to access providers other than WMH, who they feel rely much too heavily on interns to provide services. They are also experiencing delays in getting medications from the designated provider, so instead they go to the emergency room.

Foster parents were pleased with the use of teaming. They have been taught that they can call a meeting if they need to. They have found all but one worker to be very responsive.

### **Juvenile Court Judge**

This judge reported tremendous progress by the division. She sees team meetings happening regularly. She believes communication with the division is open. She sees a

continuing challenge in communicating the Practice Model to judges. There needs to be a way to make it more concrete.

Statewide, GAL's are reporting that insufficient attention is being paid to child protection. In Fourth District, she sees a difference because the division is willing to listen and rethink their point. She appreciates the attitude of local division leadership who are good at sitting down and talking about concerns.

This judge sees a need to get state permanency statutes to mirror ASFA, to address statewide child protection issues, and to provide more mentors and role models so that children have a glimpse of "normal" life.